

EMPLOYMENT RATES

Key Findings: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, United States

In all of the G-8 countries, males who had completed lower secondary education or below, upper secondary education/postsecondary vocational training, or academic higher education had higher employment rates than did females with a comparable amount of education.

In the United States and all other G-8 countries reporting data, higher employment rates were associated with higher levels of educational attainment. For example, among U.S. adults ages 25 to 64 in 2004, 83 percent of those who had completed academic higher education were employed, compared with 73 percent of those whose highest educational attainment was upper secondary education or postsecondary vocational training and 57 percent of those whose highest educational attainment was lower secondary education or below (figure 19a).

In 2004, the gap in employment rates between 25- to 64-year-olds whose highest educational attainment was upper secondary education or postsecondary vocational training and those who had completed less education was 16 percentage points or greater in all G-8 countries except for Japan; in Japan, the gap was 7 percentage points. In the United States, the gap was 16 percentage points. The largest gap was in the United Kingdom, at 26 percentage points.

The gap in employment rates in the United States between adults who had completed academic higher education and their counterparts whose highest educational attainment was upper secondary education or postsecondary vocational training was 10 percentage points. In the other G-8 countries, the corresponding gap ranged from 5 percentage points in France to 14 percentage points in Germany.

Figure 19b shows employment rates separately for males and females. In all of the G-8 countries, males who had completed lower secondary education or below, upper secondary education/postsecondary vocational training, or academic higher education had higher employment rates than did females with a comparable amount of education. For males whose highest educational attainment was lower secondary education or below, employment

rates ranged from 60 percent (Germany and the United Kingdom) to 79 percent (Japan). For females, the corresponding range was 33 percent (Italy) to 53 percent (Japan). In the United States, 68 percent of males and 44 percent of females whose highest educational attainment was lower secondary education or below were employed in 2004.

For males whose highest educational attainment was upper secondary education or postsecondary vocational training, employment rates ranged from 75 percent (Germany) to 89 percent (Japan). For females, the corresponding range was 60 percent (Japan) to 74 percent (United Kingdom). In the United States, 79 percent of males and 67 percent of females whose highest educational attainment was upper secondary education or postsecondary vocational training were employed in 2004.

In all of the G-8 countries, at least 84 percent of males who had completed academic higher education were employed in 2004. For females who had completed academic higher education, employment rates ranged from 77 percent (France and Italy) to 86 percent (United Kingdom), except in Japan; in Japan, the employment rate was 67 percent.

In most of the G-8 countries, the gap in employment rates between males and females was largest among adults whose highest educational attainment was lower secondary education or below and smallest among adults who had completed academic higher education. In all of the G-8 countries except Japan, the male-female gap for lower secondary education or below was two to three times the size of the gap for academic higher education. In the United States, the male-female gap was 25, 11, and 11 percentage points among adults who had completed lower secondary education or below, upper secondary education/postsecondary vocational training, and academic higher education, respectively. In Japan, the corresponding gaps in employment rates between males and females were 26, 29, and 26 percentage points. Compared to its G-8 peers, Japan had the largest gaps at the levels of upper secondary education/postsecondary vocational training and academic higher education. Italy had the largest gap at the level of lower secondary education or below (38 percentage points).

Definitions and Methodology

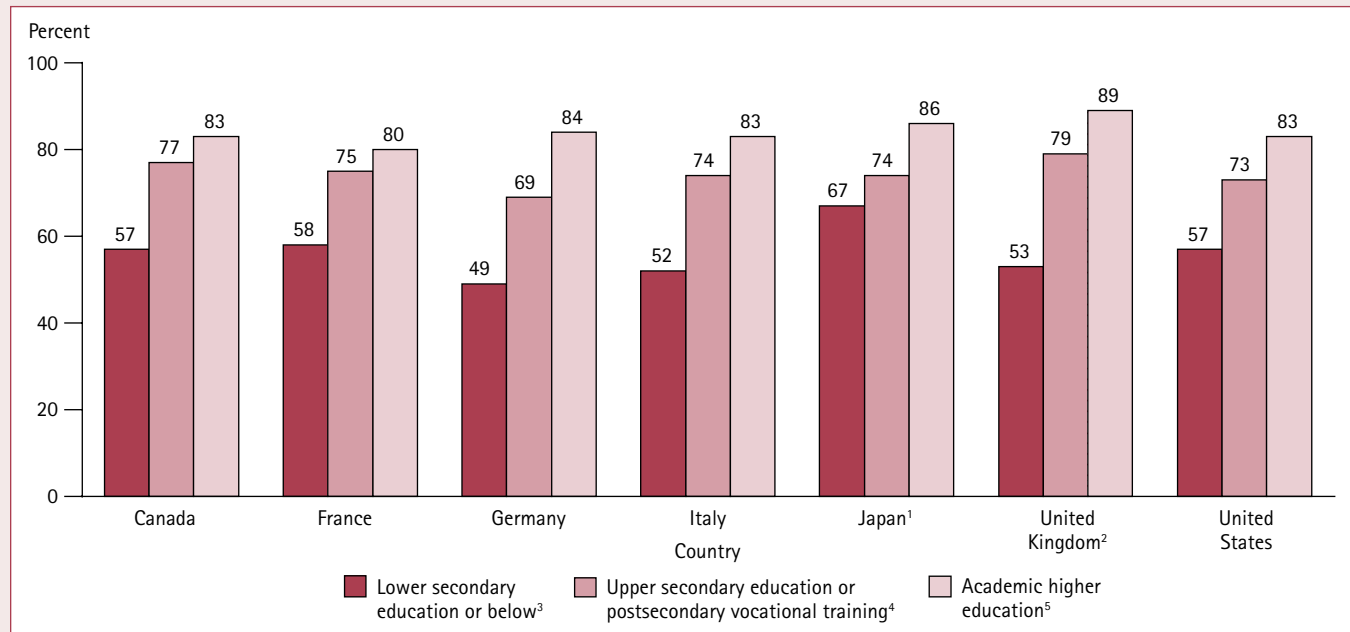
The employment rate of adults at a particular level of educational attainment is calculated as the number of individuals aged 25 to 64 with the particular level of educational attainment who are in employment divided by the number of individuals aged 25 to 64 with the same level of educational attainment.

As shown in the figures, education levels are defined according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). For more information on the ISCED levels, see appendix A. Individuals whose highest level of education is academic higher education have completed at least a first university degree program, which prepares

students for advanced research and highly qualified professions. First university degree programs vary in duration in different countries in different programs of study. In the United States, the first university degree corresponds to a bachelor's degree; it excludes associate's degrees.

Percentage-point differences presented in the text are computed from unrounded numbers; therefore, they may differ from computations made using the rounded whole numbers that appear in the figures.

Figure 19a. Employment rates of adults aged 25 to 64, by highest level of education and country: 2004



¹Reference year is 2003 rather than 2004.

²The United Kingdom includes England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

³Includes ISCED levels 0 (preprimary education), 1 (primary education), and 2 (lower secondary education).

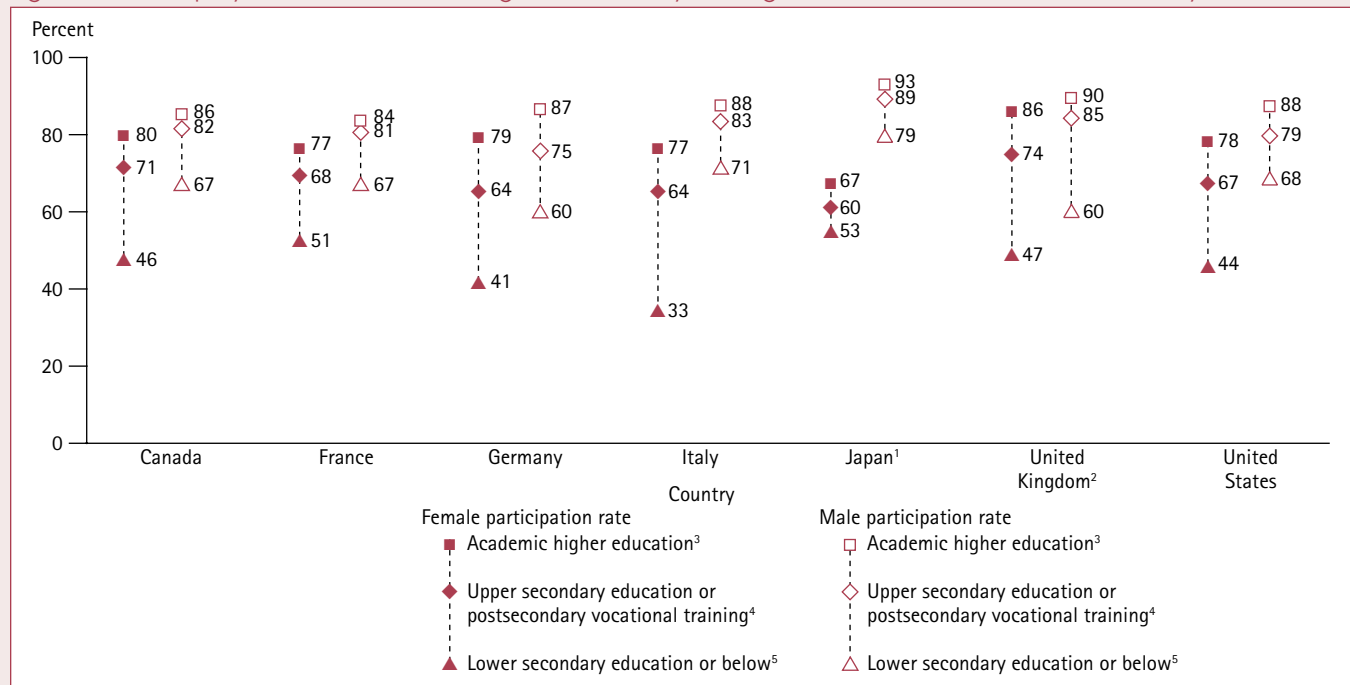
⁴Includes ISCED levels 3 (upper secondary education) and 4 (postsecondary nontertiary programs).

⁵Includes ISCED levels 5A (academic higher education below the doctoral level) and 6 (doctoral level of academic higher education).

NOTE: Education levels are defined according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). For more information on the ISCED levels, see appendix A in this report.

SOURCE: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). (2006). *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators 2006*, table A8.3a and web table A8.1b. Paris: Author. Retrieved April 26, 2007, from <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/47/51/37363421.xls>.

Figure 19b. Employment rates of adults aged 25 to 64, by sex, highest level of education, and country: 2004



¹Reference year is 2003 rather than 2004.

²The United Kingdom includes England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

³Includes ISCED levels 5A (academic higher education below the doctoral level) and 6 (doctoral level of academic higher education).

⁴Includes ISCED levels 3 (upper secondary education) and 4 (postsecondary nontertiary programs).

⁵Includes ISCED levels 0 (preprimary education), 1 (primary education), and 2 (lower secondary education).

NOTE: Education levels are defined according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). For more information on the ISCED levels, see appendix A in this report.

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